



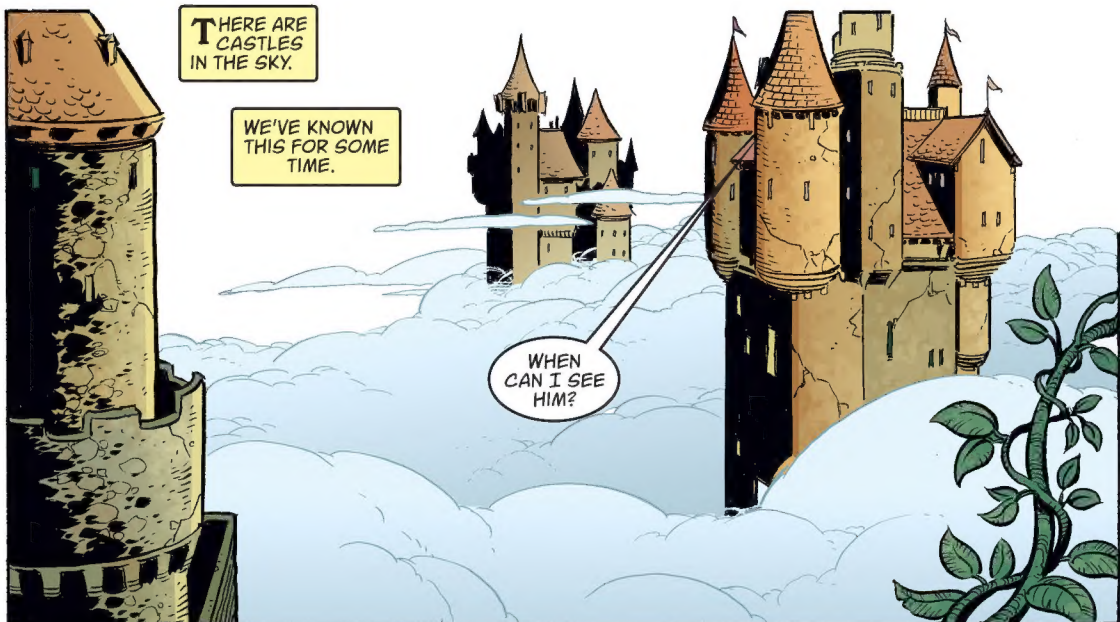
FABRIFES

VERTIGO

NO. 51
WILLINGHAM
MCMANUS

Sep 06

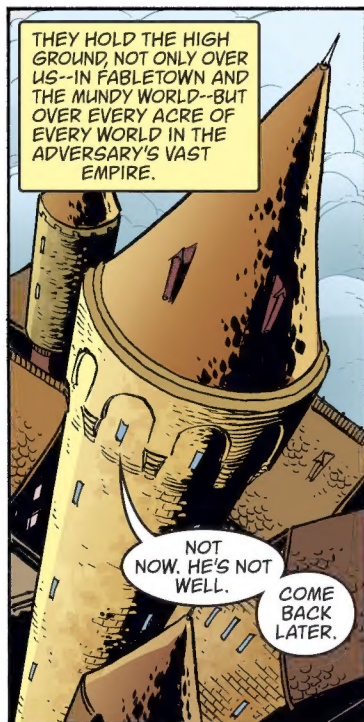
SUGGESTED FOR
MATURE READERS
vertigo.comics.com



THERE ARE CASTLES IN THE SKY.

WE'VE KNOWN THIS FOR SOME TIME.

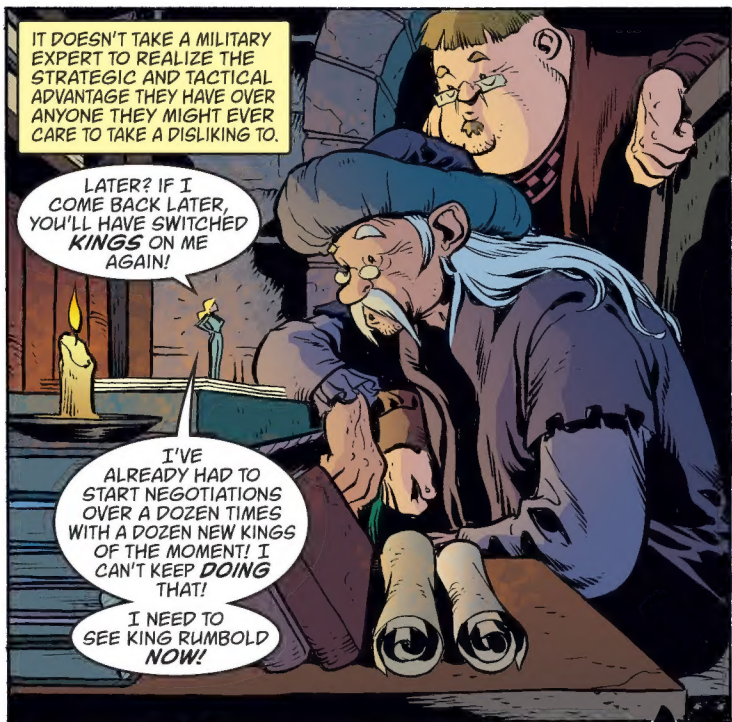
WHEN CAN I SEE HIM?



THEY HOLD THE HIGH GROUND, NOT ONLY OVER US--IN FABLETOWN AND THE MUNDY WORLD--BUT OVER EVERY ACRE OF EVERY WORLD IN THE ADVERSARY'S VAST EMPIRE.

NOT NOW. HE'S NOT WELL.

COME BACK LATER.



IT DOESN'T TAKE A MILITARY EXPERT TO REALIZE THE STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL ADVANTAGE THEY HAVE OVER ANYONE THEY MIGHT EVER CARE TO TAKE A DISLIKING TO.

LATER? IF I COME BACK LATER, YOU'LL HAVE SWITCHED KINGS ON ME AGAIN!

I'VE ALREADY HAD TO START NEGOTIATIONS OVER A DOZEN TIMES WITH A DOZEN NEW KINGS OF THE MOMENT! I CAN'T KEEP DOING THAT!

I NEED TO SEE KING RUMBOLD NOW!

BIG and small

In which we learn that Cinderella doesn't have three days, and a small infirmity has big consequences for our beloved Fabletown.

BILL WILLINGHAM: writer/creator	SHAWN McMANUS: guest artist
LEE LOUGHRIDGE: colors	TODD JAMES KLEIN: letters
ANGELA RUFINO: asst. editor	JEAN BOND: cover
	SHELLY BOND: editor

THAT'S WHERE I COME IN. OVER THE YEARS I'VE DONE MANY DARK AND DIRTY THINGS IN SERVICE TO FABLETOWN, BUT NEVER ANYTHING SO UGLY AND VITAL AS THIS.



UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S THE WAY WE DO THINGS UP HERE, CINDERELLA.

NO ONE MUCH LIKES BEING HIGH KING, OVER ALL THE OTHER KINGS IN THE CLOUDS.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY CLANDESTINE CAREER, I'VE LEFT THE WORLD OF CLOAK AND DAGGER SKULDUGGERY BEHIND TO SINK EVEN FARTHER DOWN INTO A MORE DISREPUTABLE ACTIVITY.



IT'S ALL ADDITIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, WITHOUT ANY ADDED PLEASURES.

SO THE VARIOUS KINGS IN THE CLOUDS TEND TO PASS THE DISTASTEFUL JOB AMONGST EACH OTHER, LIKE ONE OF YOUR HOT...HOT...?

WHAT'S THE IDIOM YOU DELIGHTFUL LITTLE PEOPLE USE?



POLITICS.

A HOT POTATO.

AH, YES. SUCH A COLORFUL LANGUAGE.

IN ANY CASE, RUMBOLD IS HIGH KING FOR NOW, BUT HE CAN'T BE EXPECTED TO WORK WHEN HE DOESN'T FEEL WELL.



LORDY, HOW I DO HATE POLITICS.

BUT EVERYTHING'S BEEN NEGOTIATED, AND THIS TREATY BETWEEN FABLETOWN AND THE CLOUD KINGDOMS IS READY TO SIGN!

ONE QUICK DIP OF HIS ROYAL PEN AND OUR MONTHS OF WORK IS COMPLETED!



MAY I ASK WHAT SPECIFICALLY IS WRONG WITH HIM?

A MOST TROUBLESOME INFIRMITY OF THE EAR. BUT WE'RE ACTUALLY IN LUCK HERE.

DOCTOR JOLIMUMP IS AN EXPERT AT TREATING THIS PARTICULAR AFFLICTION.



I'M NOT *NORMALLY* ONE TO SING MY OWN PRAISES, BUT IN THIS CASE IT'S TRUE. TREATING THIS DISEASE HAPPENS TO BE AMONG MY SPECIALTIES.

I HAVE TO MAKE THE PRESCRIBED SACRIFICES, PERFORM THE PROPER RITUAL PANTOMIME, AND CHANT THE SIX INDICATED PRAYERS.



AND IN A MERE MONTH OR TWO HE'LL BE AS GOOD AS NEW!

A MONTH?

IT'S TRUE! I'VE SEEN IT HAPPEN EVERY TIME THIS DISEASE MAKES ITS ROUNDS THROUGH OUR KINGDOMS.



VERY FEW OF DOCTOR JOLIMUMP'S PATIENTS FESTER AND DIE.

DIE? FROM AN EAR ACHE?

MEDICINE IS AS MUCH AN ART AS A SCIENCE, LITTLE LADY. I'VE SPENT YEARS HONING MY SKILLS.



REMEMBER MY EARLY DAYS, MINISTER GUSTROLF?

OH YES, OUR DEAR PHYSICIAN WAS A SIGHT TO SEE ONCE UPON A TIME.

HE BARELY KNEW A COGENT PRAYER AND COULD ONLY DANCE THE SAME, GENERAL GET-WELL DANCE THAT ANY VILLAGE CRONE KNEW.



BUT I IMPROVED. I PURSUED MY CALLING WITH A SINGLE-MINDED VIGOR.

I'M CERTAIN THAT ONCE I COMPOSE THE PERFECT SEVENTH PRAYER, THE MORTALITY RATE FOR THIS DISORDER WILL DROP TO ZERO.



I'VE REALLY LANDED IN IT THIS TIME.

IT IS OUR UNDENIABLE GOOD FORTUNE TO HAVE SUCH A DEDICATED SCHOLAR AS OUR COURT PHYSICIAN.

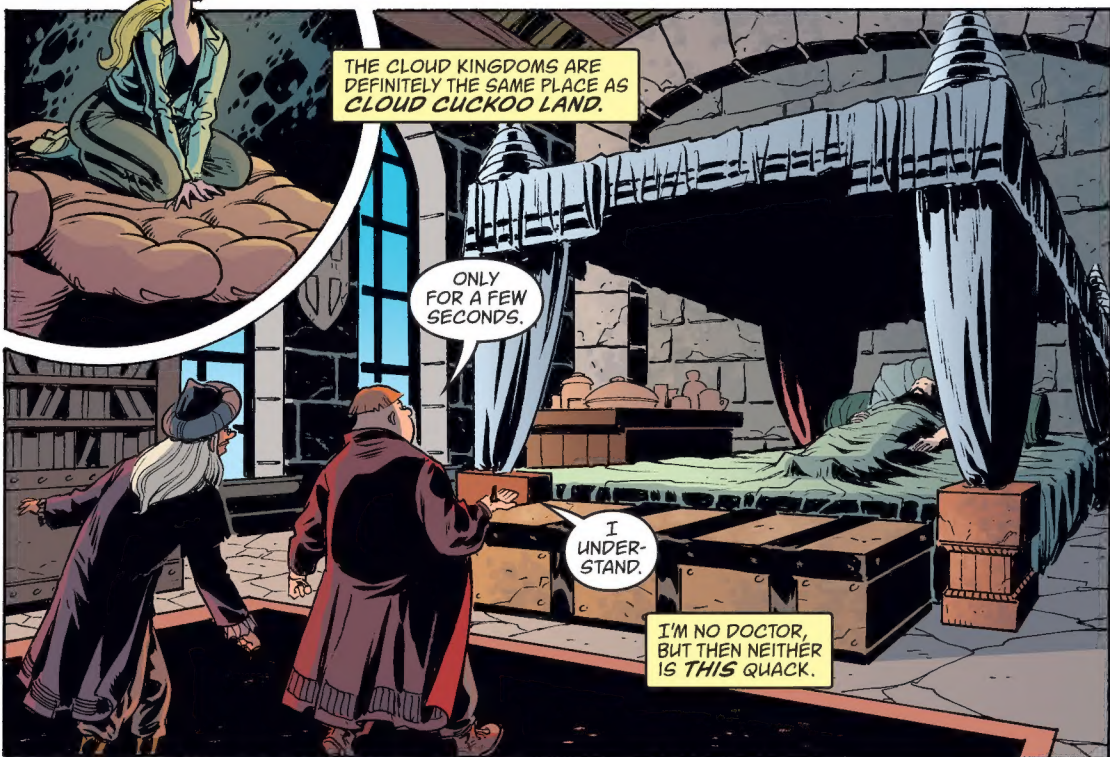
JUST AS IT'S MY GOOD FORTUNE TO PRACTICE UNDER SUCH ENLIGHTENED CIVIL ADMINISTRATORS AS YOURSELF, GUSTROLF.

BUT AT LEAST I'VE SETTLED ONE CONTROVERSY TROUBLING FABLETOWN'S OWN SCHOLARS.



UHM... I DON'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT THIS MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY, BUT I'M REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO INSIST ON AT LEAST SEEING THE KING.

MY SUPERIORS WILL EAT ME ALIVE AS IT IS, ONCE I REPORT THIS LATEST ROADBLOCK TO THEM.

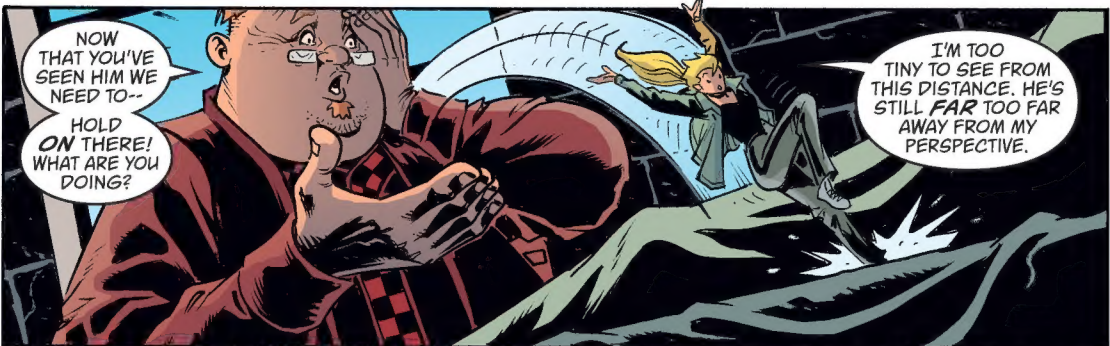


THE CLOUD KINGDOMS ARE DEFINITELY THE SAME PLACE AS CLOUD CUCKOO LAND.

ONLY FOR A FEW SECONDS.

I UNDERSTAND.

I'M NO DOCTOR, BUT THEN NEITHER IS THIS QUACK.



NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN HIM WE NEED TO--

HOLD ON THERE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

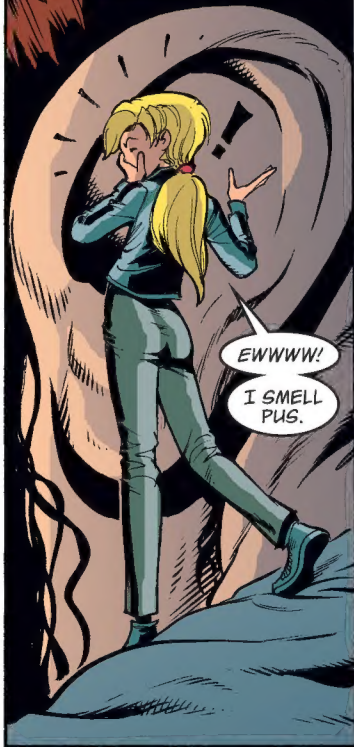
I'M TOO TINY TO SEE FROM THIS DISTANCE. HE'S STILL FAR TOO FAR AWAY FROM MY PERSPECTIVE.

WHAT I AM IS A MODERN GIRL LIVING IN A MODERN WORLD. I'VE ABSORBED SOME BASIC SCIENCE THROUGH SIMPLE CULTURAL OSMOSIS.

I NEED A CLOSER LOOK.



ENOUGH TO KNOW A CURE FOR A SIMPLE EARACHE THAT TAKES A MONTH OR MORE IS NO CURE AT ALL.



EWWW!
I SMELL PUS.

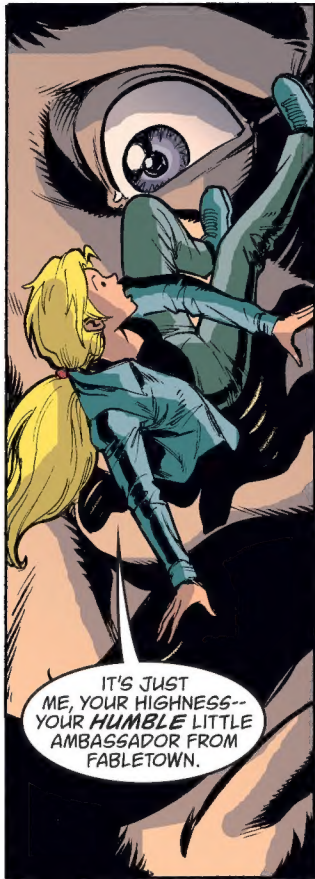
THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS!

I MUST INSIST THAT YOU LEAVE!

WHAT'S ALL THIS SCREAMING WHILE I'M TRYING TO SLEEP?



YIKES!

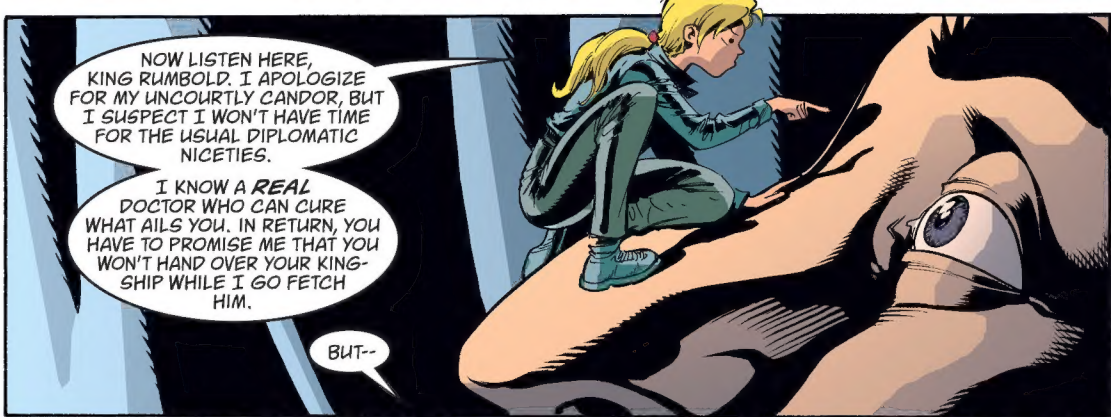


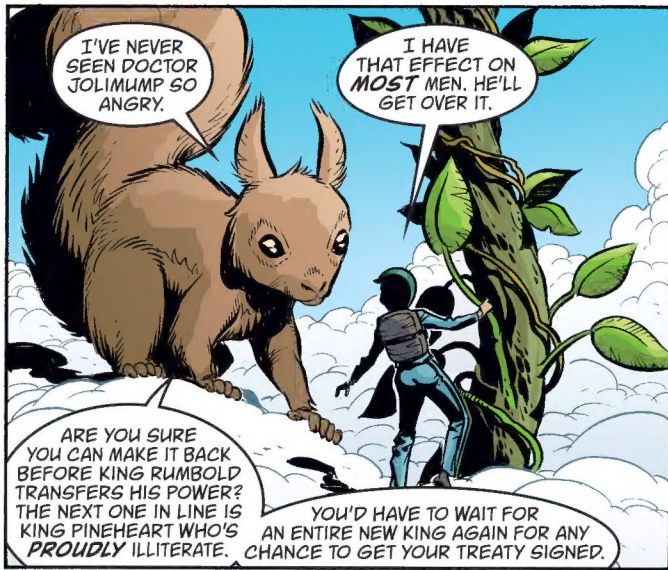
IT'S JUST ME, YOUR HIGHNESS-- YOUR *HUMBLE* LITTLE AMBASSADOR FROM FABLETOWN.

NOW LISTEN HERE, KING RUMBOLD. I APOLOGIZE FOR MY UNCOURTLY CANDOR, BUT I SUSPECT I WON'T HAVE TIME FOR THE USUAL DIPLOMATIC NICETIES.

I KNOW A *REAL* DOCTOR WHO CAN CURE WHAT AILS YOU. IN RETURN, YOU HAVE TO PROMISE ME THAT YOU WON'T HAND OVER YOUR KINGSHIP WHILE I GO FETCH HIM.

BUT--





I'VE NEVER SEEN DOCTOR JOLIMUMP SO ANGRY.

I HAVE THAT EFFECT ON MOST MEN. HE'LL GET OVER IT.

ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN MAKE IT BACK BEFORE KING RUMBOLD TRANSFERS HIS POWER? THE NEXT ONE IN LINE IS KING PINEHEART WHO'S PROUDLY ILLITERATE.

YOU'D HAVE TO WAIT FOR AN ENTIRE NEW KING AGAIN FOR ANY CHANCE TO GET YOUR TREATY SIGNED.



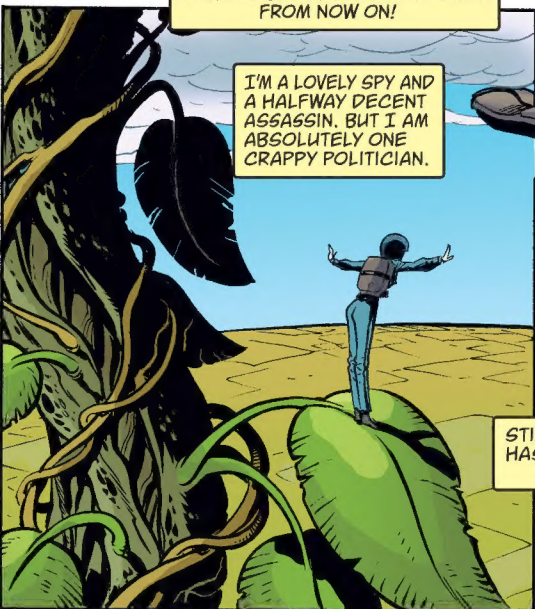
OH JOY.

MY LIFE GETS BETTER ALL THE TIME.

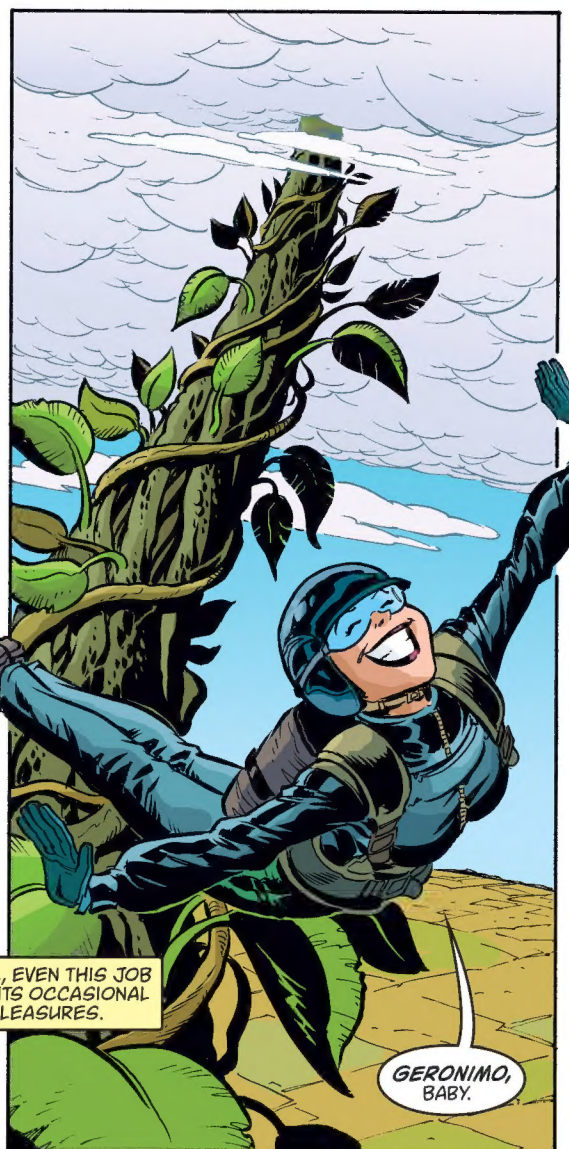


FIRST THING I DO, ONCE THIS NONSENSE IS ALL DONE, IS TRAP OUR HANDSOME SHERIFF IN HIS OFFICE AND LAY DOWN THE LAW.

NO MORE DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS! NOTHING BUT CLOAK AND DAGGER FROM NOW ON!



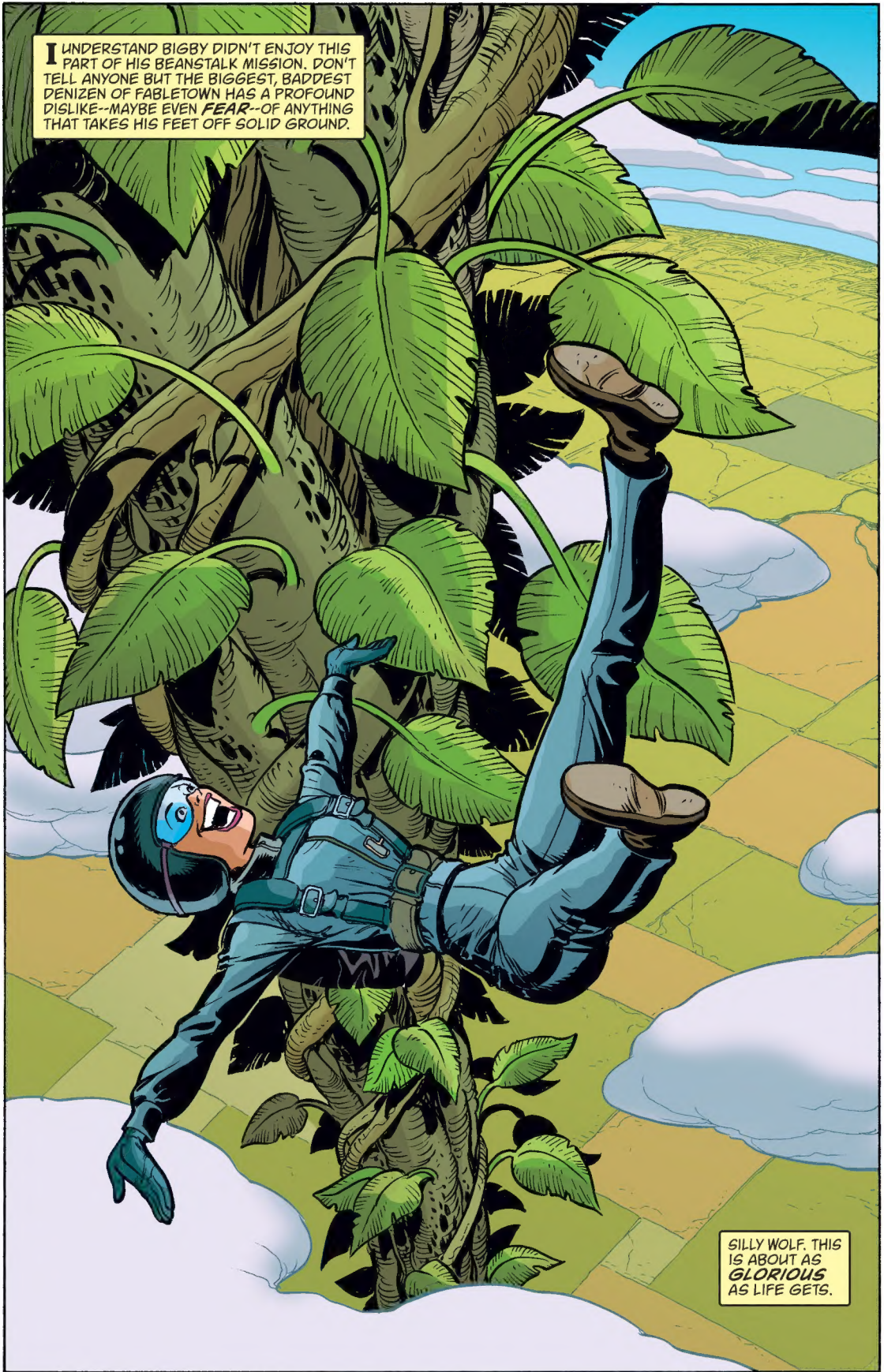
I'M A LOVELY SPY AND A HALFWAY DECENT ASSASSIN. BUT I AM ABSOLUTELY ONE CRAPPY POLITICIAN.



STILL, EVEN THIS JOB HAS ITS OCCASIONAL PLEASURES.

GERONIMO, BABY.

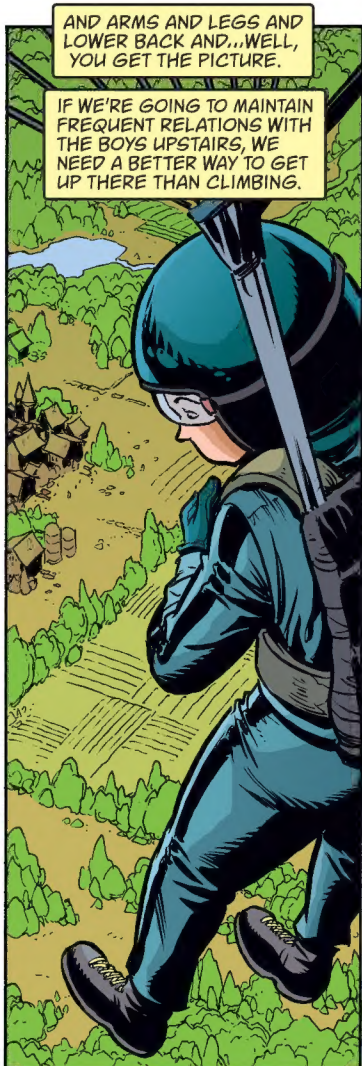
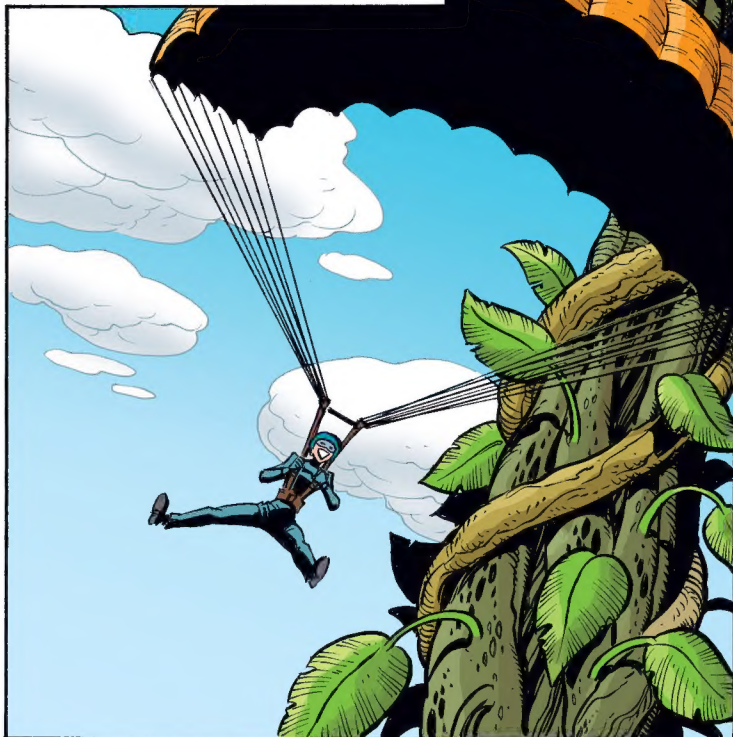
I UNDERSTAND BIGBY DIDN'T ENJOY THIS PART OF HIS BEANSTALK MISSION. DON'T TELL ANYONE BUT THE BIGGEST, BADDEST DENIZEN OF FABLETOWN HAS A PROFOUND DISLIKE--MAYBE EVEN *FEAR*--OF ANYTHING THAT TAKES HIS FEET OFF SOLID GROUND.



SILLY WOLF. THIS IS ABOUT AS *GLORIOUS* AS LIFE GETS.



BUT AS LOVELY AS THE METHOD OF GETTING DOWN THE BEANSTALK IS, GETTING BACK UP IT AGAIN IS ALWAYS A ROYAL PAIN IN THE ASS.



AND ARMS AND LEGS AND LOWER BACK AND...WELL, YOU GET THE PICTURE.

IF WE'RE GOING TO MAINTAIN FREQUENT RELATIONS WITH THE BOYS UPSTAIRS, WE NEED A BETTER WAY TO GET UP THERE THAN CLIMBING.

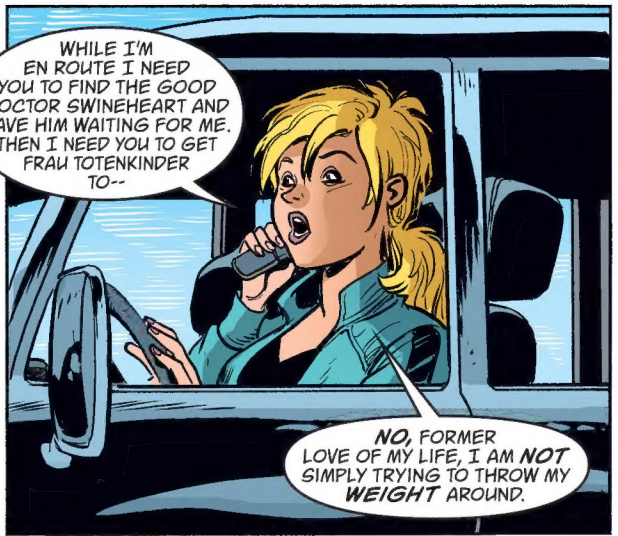


I MEAN, COME ON! IT MAY *STILL* BE THE DARK AGES UP THERE, BUT DOWN HERE WE'VE GOT ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY OUT THE WING-WANG.

WOULD IT REALLY *KILL* US TO RIG UP SOME SORT OF ELEVATOR ATTACHED TO THE BEANSTALK?

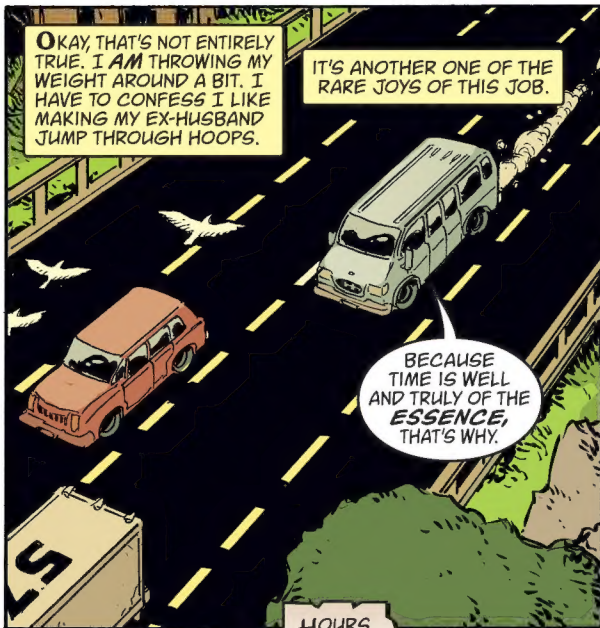


YES, MIGHTY PRINCE OF MAYORS, THIS IS *SOMETHING* OF AN EMERGENCY. I'M ON MY WAY TO FABLETOWN. THEN I'LL NEED TO GET BACK TO THE FARM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



WHILE I'M EN ROUTE I NEED YOU TO FIND THE GOOD DOCTOR SWINEHEART AND HAVE HIM WAITING FOR ME. THEN I NEED YOU TO GET FRAU TOTENKINDER TO--

NO, FORMER LOVE OF MY LIFE, I AM *NOT* SIMPLY TRYING TO THROW MY WEIGHT AROUND.



OKAY, THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY TRUE. I *AM* THROWING MY WEIGHT AROUND A BIT. I HAVE TO CONFESS I LIKE MAKING MY EX-HUSBAND JUMP THROUGH HOOPS.

IT'S ANOTHER ONE OF THE RARE JOYS OF THIS JOB.

BECAUSE TIME IS WELL AND TRULY OF THE *ESSENCE*, THAT'S WHY.

HOURS LATER...

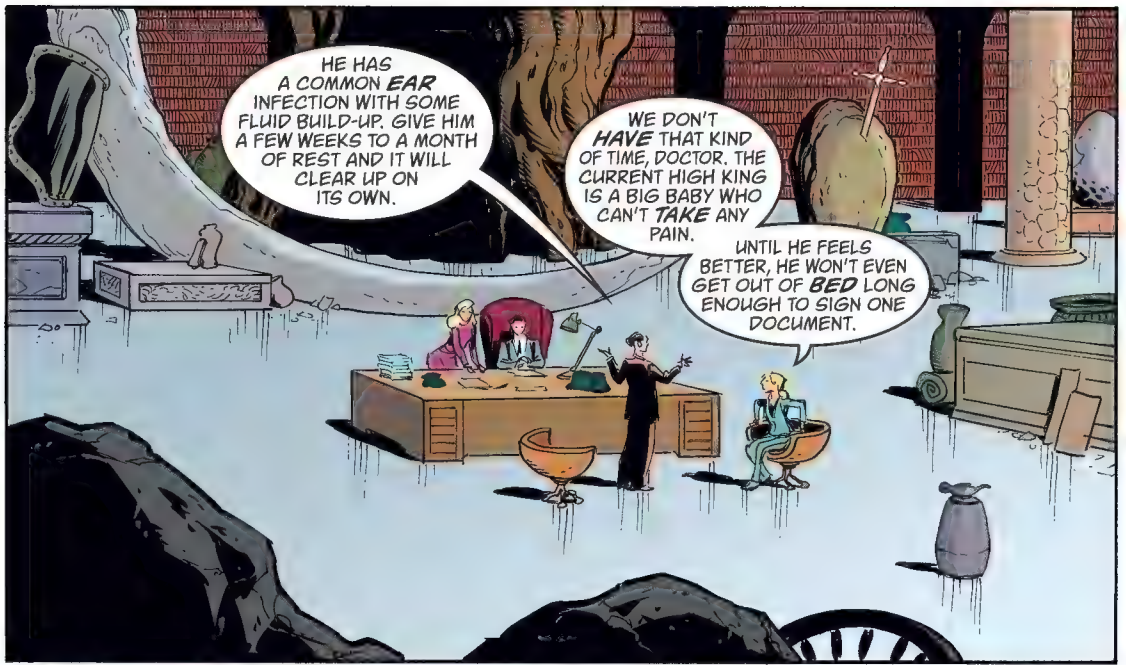


OF COURSE I CAN'T BE CERTAIN WITHOUT EXAMINING THE PATIENT *DIRECTLY*, BUT WHAT YOU'VE DESCRIBED SOUNDS LIKE A SIMPLE CASE OF OTITIS MEDIA WITH EFFUSION.



FABLETOWN.

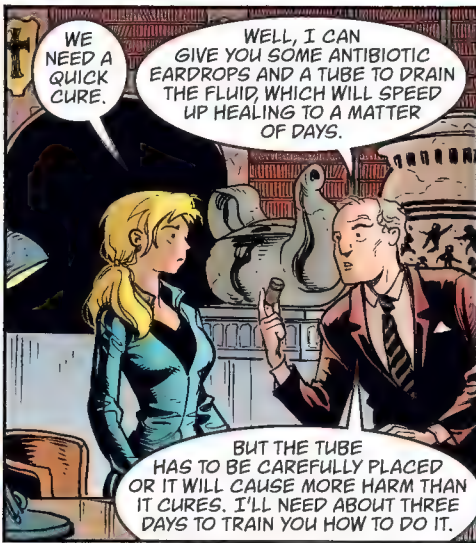
CAN YOU GIVE THAT TO ME AGAIN IN ENGLISH?



HE HAS A COMMON EAR INFECTION WITH SOME FLUID BUILD-UP. GIVE HIM A FEW WEEKS TO A MONTH OF REST AND IT WILL CLEAR UP ON ITS OWN.

WE DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF TIME, DOCTOR. THE CURRENT HIGH KING IS A BIG BABY WHO CAN'T TAKE ANY PAIN.

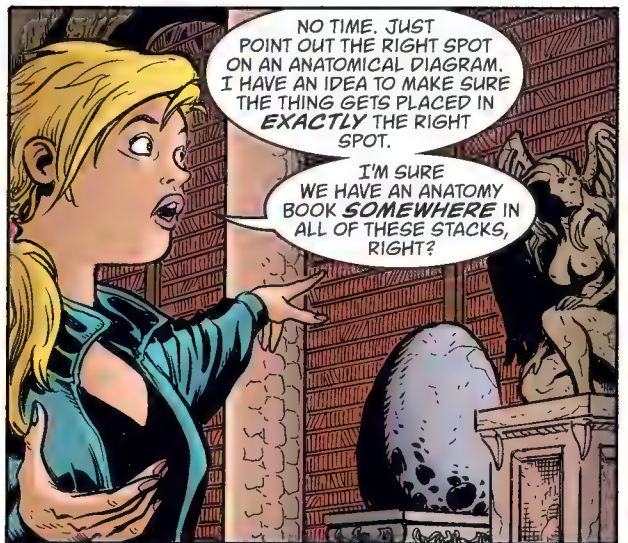
UNTIL HE FEELS BETTER, HE WON'T EVEN GET OUT OF BED LONG ENOUGH TO SIGN ONE DOCUMENT.



WE NEED A QUICK CURE.

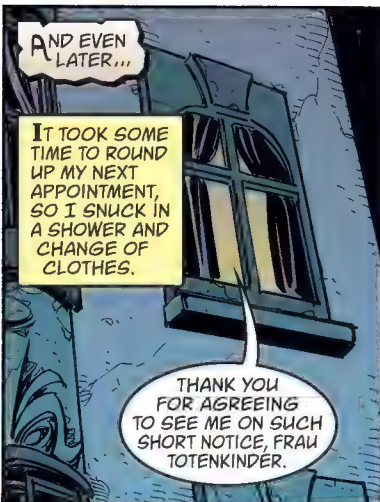
WELL, I CAN GIVE YOU SOME ANTIBIOTIC EARDROPS AND A TUBE TO DRAIN THE FLUID, WHICH WILL SPEED UP HEALING TO A MATTER OF DAYS.

BUT THE TUBE HAS TO BE CAREFULLY PLACED OR IT WILL CAUSE MORE HARM THAN IT CURES. I'LL NEED ABOUT THREE DAYS TO TRAIN YOU HOW TO DO IT.



NO TIME. JUST POINT OUT THE RIGHT SPOT ON AN ANATOMICAL DIAGRAM. I HAVE AN IDEA TO MAKE SURE THE THING GETS PLACED IN EXACTLY THE RIGHT SPOT.

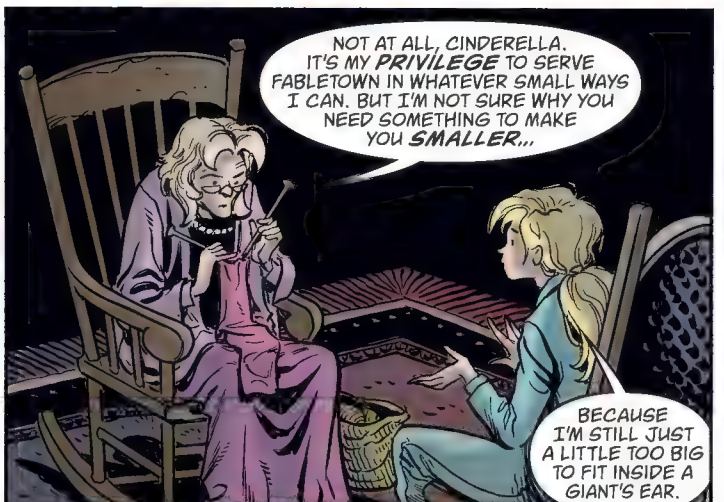
I'M SURE WE HAVE AN ANATOMY BOOK *SOMEWHERE* IN ALL OF THESE STACKS, RIGHT?



AND EVEN LATER...

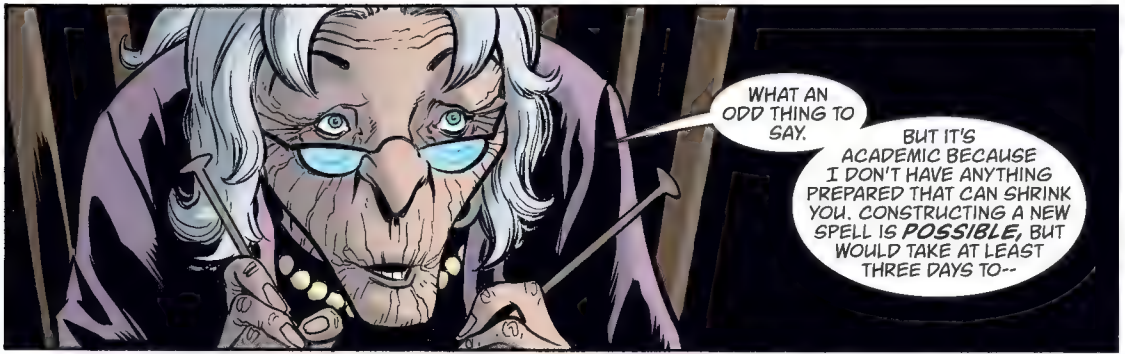
IT TOOK SOME TIME TO ROUND UP MY NEXT APPOINTMENT, SO I SNUCK IN A SHOWER AND CHANGE OF CLOTHES.

THANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO SEE ME ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, FRAU TOTENKINDER.



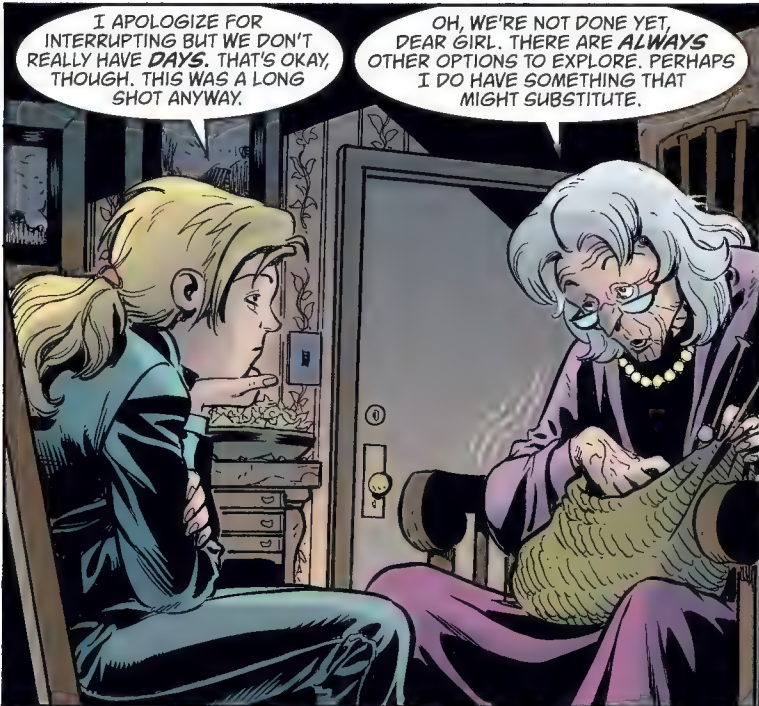
NOT AT ALL, CINDERELLA. IT'S MY PRIVILEGE TO SERVE FABLETOWN IN WHATEVER SMALL WAYS I CAN. BUT I'M NOT SURE WHY YOU NEED SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU *SMALLER*...

BECAUSE I'M STILL JUST A LITTLE TOO BIG TO FIT INSIDE A GIANT'S EAR.



WHAT AN ODD THING TO SAY.

BUT IT'S ACADEMIC BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING PREPARED THAT CAN SHRINK YOU. CONSTRUCTING A NEW SPELL IS *POSSIBLE*, BUT WOULD TAKE AT LEAST THREE DAYS TO--



I APOLOGIZE FOR INTERRUPTING BUT WE DON'T REALLY HAVE *DAYS*. THAT'S OKAY, THOUGH. THIS WAS A LONG SHOT ANYWAY.

OH, WE'RE NOT DONE YET, DEAR GIRL. THERE ARE *ALWAYS* OTHER OPTIONS TO EXPLORE. PERHAPS I DO HAVE SOMETHING THAT MIGHT SUBSTITUTE.



IT'S NOT PRECISELY WHAT YOU WANT, BUT YOU END UP APPROXIMATELY THE SAME SIZE.

AT THIS POINT I'M WILLING TO TRY MOST ANYTHING.



WITHIN AN HOUR I'M ON THE ROAD AGAIN ON MY WAY BACK UP TO THE FARM.

ROSE RED, THIS IS CINDY. WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR SOMEONE MY SIZE VISITING SMALLTOWN?

I HAVE A BACKUP PLAN. I *ALWAYS* HAVE A BACKUP PLAN, BECAUSE I'M JUST THAT GOOD.



THREE DAYS' TRAINING? I'M NOT GOING TO *STOMP* ON ANYONE. AND WHY DOES EVERYTHING IN THIS CAPER TAKE *THREE DAYS*?



THREE DAYS TO LEARN HOW TO PLACE A DRAINAGE TUBE! THREE DAYS TO BUILD A SHRINKING SPELL! THREE DAYS TO LEARN HOW **NOT** TO STEP ON TINY PEOPLE!

GODS ABOVE, WILL EVERYONE **PLEASE** GET IT THROUGH YOUR COLLECTIVE SKULL THAT **I...** DON'T...**HAVE...** **THREE... DAYS!**



NO, ROSE, I'M SORRY. I WASN'T SPECIFICALLY YELLING AT **YOU**. IT'S THE ENTIRE **UNIVERSE** THAT'S PISSING ME OFF RIGHT NOW.



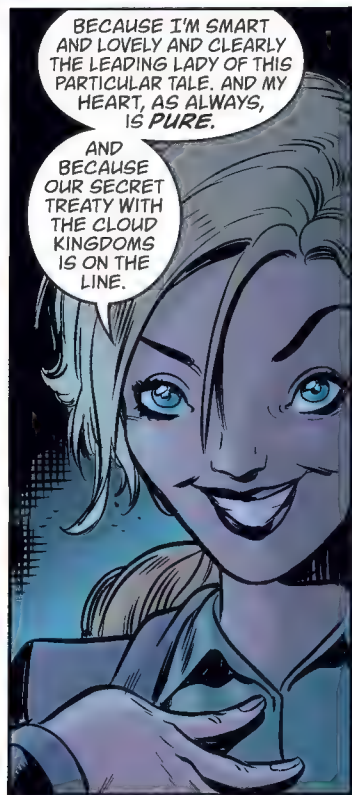
A FEW HOURS LATER...

TRUST ME. I WON'T BE **BIG** ENOUGH TO STOMP ON ANYONE.



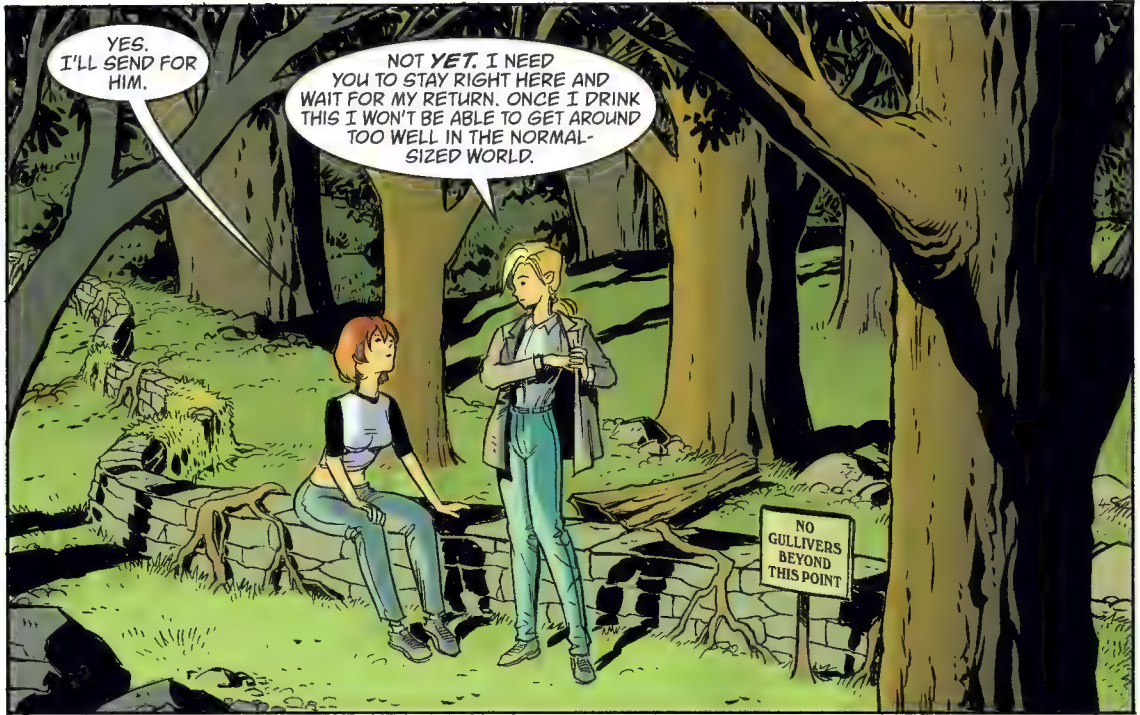
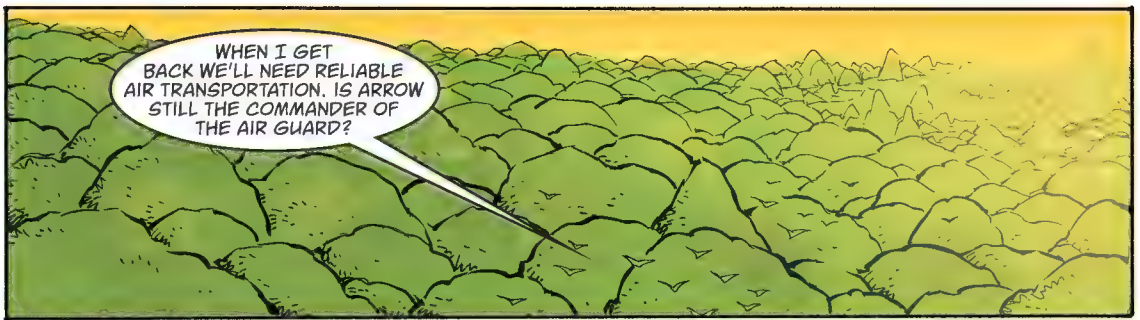
JUST GUIDE ME TO THE EDGE OF THEIR TERRITORY AND I'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE, ROSE.

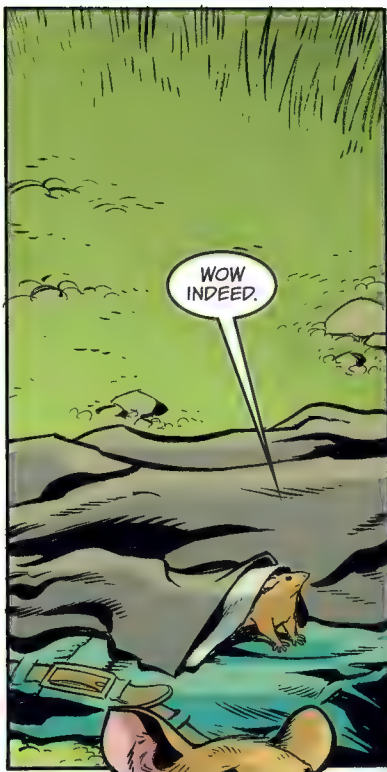
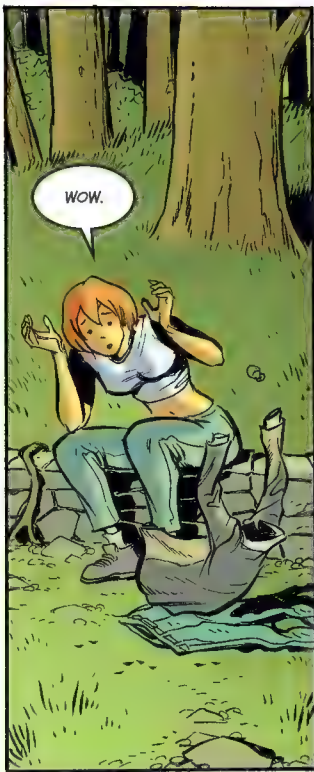
AND I'M WILLING TO TAKE YOUR WORD ON THIS **WHY** EXACTLY?



BECAUSE I'M SMART AND LOVELY AND CLEARLY THE LEADING LADY OF THIS PARTICULAR TALE. AND MY HEART, AS ALWAYS, IS **PURE**.

AND BECAUSE OUR SECRET TREATY WITH THE CLOUD KINGDOMS IS ON THE LINE.







BEING ABLE TO FLY UNDER MY OWN POWER WOULD BE UNDENIABLY HELPFUL ON SOME OF MY MISSIONS--

--NOT TO MENTION HOW UNBELIEVABLY COOL IT WOULD BE.



HALT!

YIKES!



WHO GOES THERE?

UHM--HI, I WAS JUST--YOU KNOW-- HEADING INTO SMALLTOWN TO UHM--

WELL, CORPORAL CLIVE, SHE CAN TALK, SO SHE'S OBVIOUSLY A FABLE MOUSE. BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN HER BEFORE.



SO, YOU'RE NOT A RESIDENT OF SMALLTOWN? AND YOU AREN'T A MEMBER OF THE MOUNTED POLICE?

NO, I'M-- WELL, THIS IS GOING TO SOUND A BIT ODD, BUT--

MOVE ALONG, STRANGER.



NO, OFFICER, I WON'T BE MOVING ALONG.

WHAT I AM GOING TO DO IS PROCEED WITH YOUR GUIDANCE INTO SMALLTOWN, WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO POINT OUT YOUR TOWN MEDIC TO ME.

YOU CAN'T ORDER US AROUND!



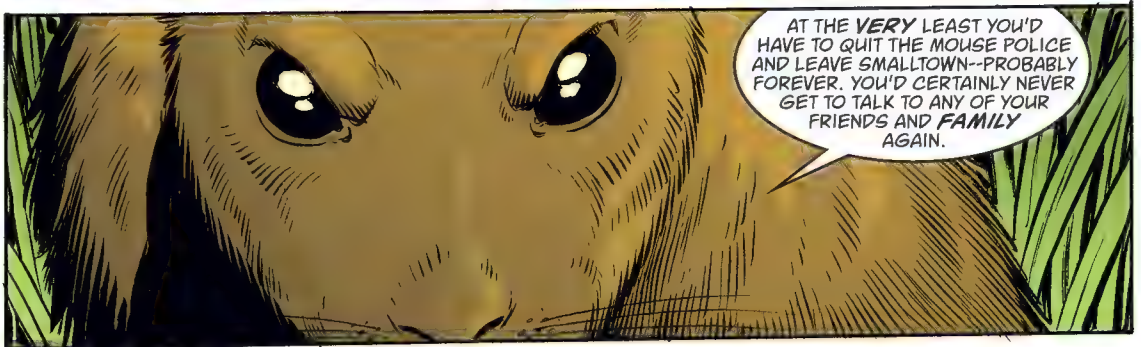
YES, IN FACT I **CAN**. I HAVE ALL SORTS OF AUTHORITY TO PUSH YOU BOTH AROUND, OR FOLD, SPINDLE OR **MUTILATE** YOU TO MY HEART'S CONTENT.

BUT I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT. **NOR** DO I WANT TO LET YOU IN ON ANY OF THE DETAILS OF MY MISSION FOR YOUR **OWN** GOOD.



SEE? IF I WERE TO SPILL MY SECRETS AND TELL YOU ENOUGH TO CONVINCE YOU OF MY **AUTHORITY**, YOU'D SUDDENLY HAVE WHAT'S KNOWN AS **HIGH SECURITY CLEARANCE**.

AND THAT WOULD CHANGE YOUR LIVES IN WAYS THAT--**TRUST** ME--YOU WOULDN'T WANT.

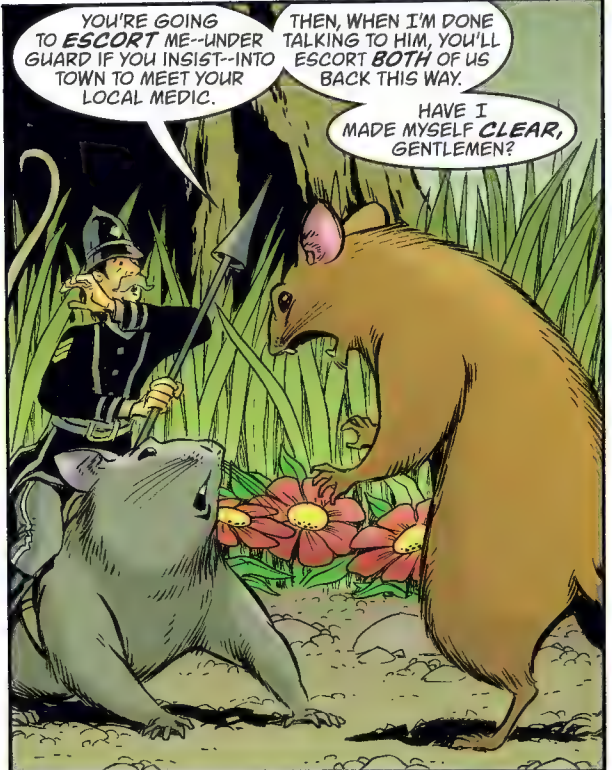


AT THE **VERY** LEAST YOU'D HAVE TO QUIT THE MOUSE POLICE AND LEAVE SMALLTOWN--PROBABLY FOREVER. YOU'D CERTAINLY NEVER GET TO TALK TO ANY OF YOUR FRIENDS AND **FAMILY** AGAIN.



YOU'D PROBABLY LIVE OUT THE REST OF YOUR LIVES IN A VERY SMALL **BOX** SOMEWHERE IN THE WOODLAND BUSINESS OFFICE.

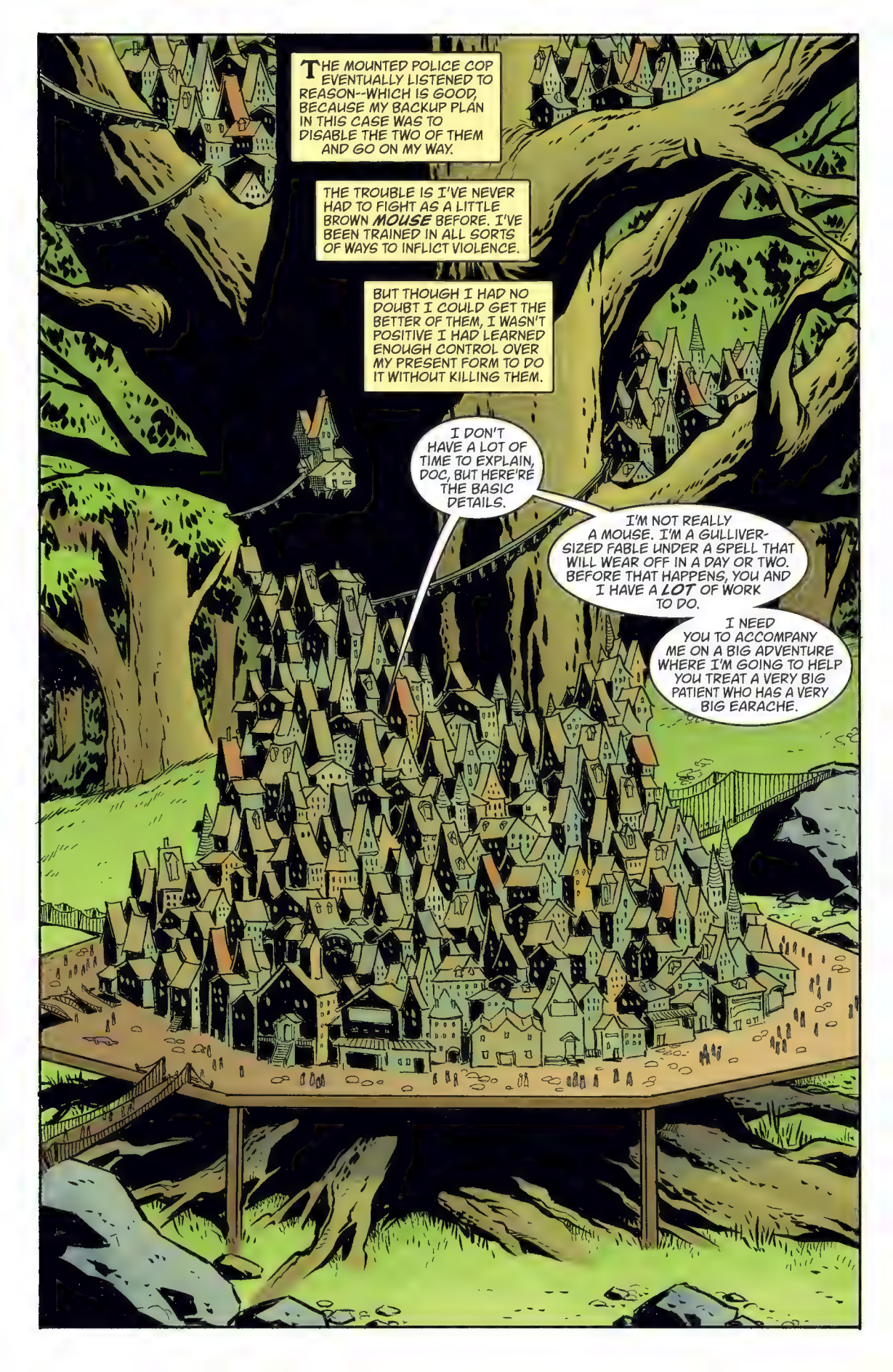
SO, SINCE YOU WOULDN'T WANT **THAT** TO HAPPEN TO YOU AND I WOULDN'T WANT TO **DO** THAT TO YOU, HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO INSTEAD.



YOU'RE GOING TO **ESCORT** ME--UNDER GUARD IF YOU INSIST--INTO TOWN TO MEET YOUR LOCAL MEDIC.

THEN, WHEN I'M DONE TALKING TO HIM, YOU'LL **ESCORT** **BOTH** OF US BACK THIS WAY.

HAVE I MADE MYSELF **CLEAR**, GENTLEMEN?



THE MOUNTED POLICE COP
EVENTUALLY LISTENED TO
REASON--WHICH IS GOOD,
BECAUSE MY BACKUP PLAN
IN THIS CASE WAS TO
DISABLE THE TWO OF THEM
AND GO ON MY WAY.

THE TROUBLE IS I'VE NEVER
HAD TO FIGHT AS A LITTLE
BROWN *MOUSE* BEFORE. I'VE
BEEN TRAINED IN ALL SORTS
OF WAYS TO INFLICT VIOLENCE.

BUT THOUGH I HAD NO
DOUBT I COULD GET THE
BETTER OF THEM, I WASN'T
POSITIVE I HAD LEARNED
ENOUGH CONTROL OVER
MY PRESENT FORM TO DO
IT WITHOUT KILLING THEM.

I DON'T
HAVE A LOT OF
TIME TO EXPLAIN,
DOC, BUT HERE'RE
THE BASIC
DETAILS.

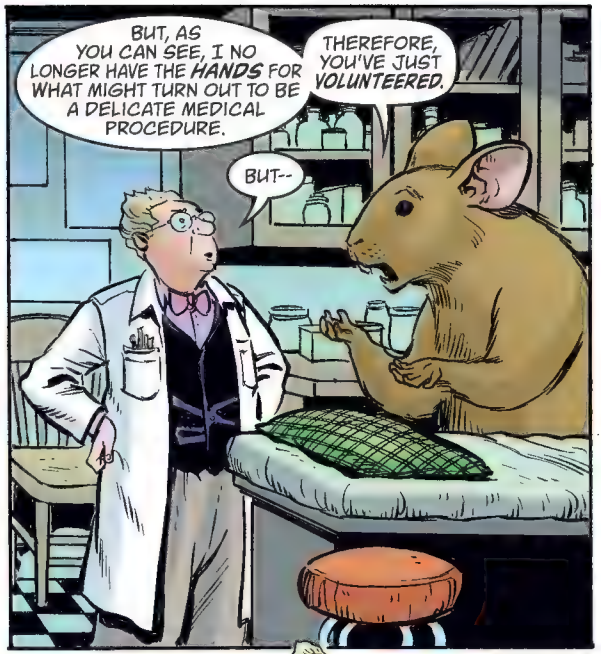
I'M NOT REALLY
A MOUSE. I'M A GULLIVER-
SIZED FABLE UNDER A SPELL THAT
WILL WEAR OFF IN A DAY OR TWO.
BEFORE THAT HAPPENS, YOU AND
I HAVE A LOT OF WORK
TO DO.

I NEED
YOU TO ACCOMPANY
ME ON A BIG ADVENTURE
WHERE I'M GOING TO HELP
YOU TREAT A VERY BIG
PATIENT WHO HAS A VERY
BIG EARACHE.



I'VE GOT THE MEDICINE AND TOOLS WE NEED, AND OUR TRANSPORTATION IS BEING ARRANGED.

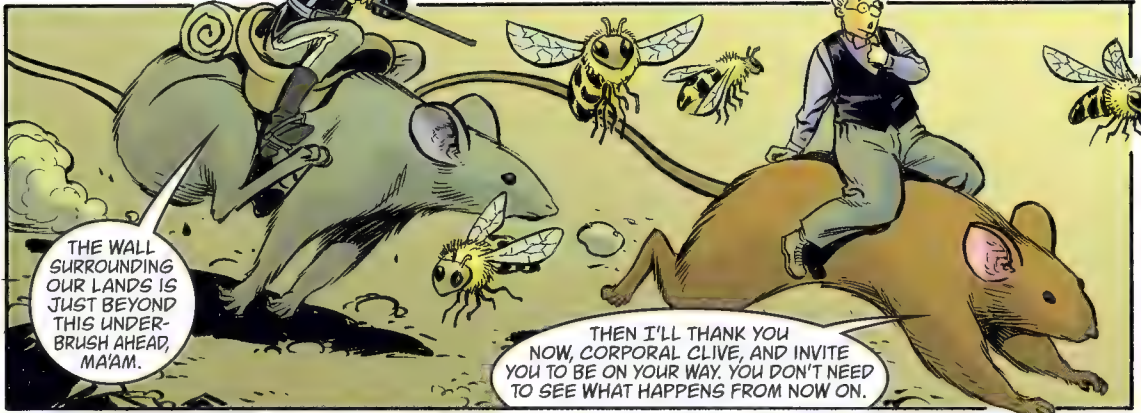
I'M SORRY I HAVE TO RECRUIT YOU, DOC. I WAS **ORIGINALLY** PLANNING TO DO THIS JOB MYSELF.



BUT, AS YOU CAN SEE, I NO LONGER HAVE THE **HANDS** FOR WHAT MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE A DELICATE MEDICAL PROCEDURE.

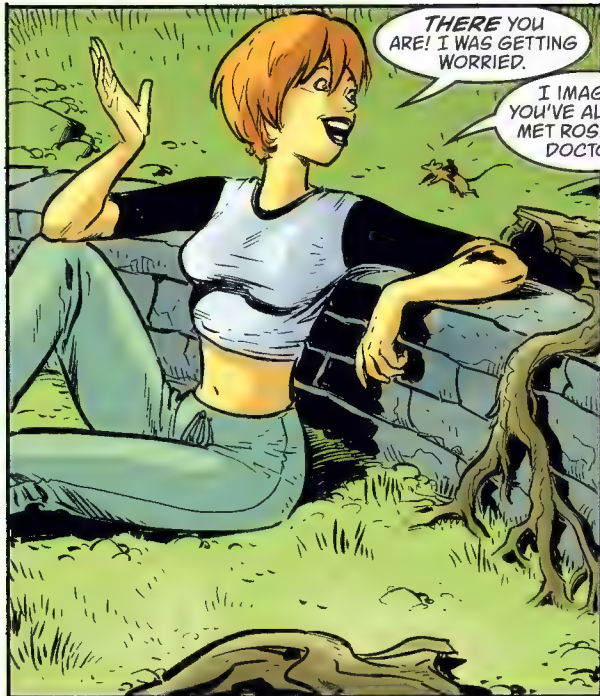
THEREFORE, YOU'VE JUST **VOLUNTEERED**.

BUT--



THE WALL SURROUNDING OUR LANDS IS JUST BEYOND THIS UNDERBRUSH AHEAD, MA'AM.

THEN I'LL THANK YOU NOW, CORPORAL CLIVE, AND INVITE YOU TO BE ON YOUR WAY. YOU DON'T NEED TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS FROM NOW ON.

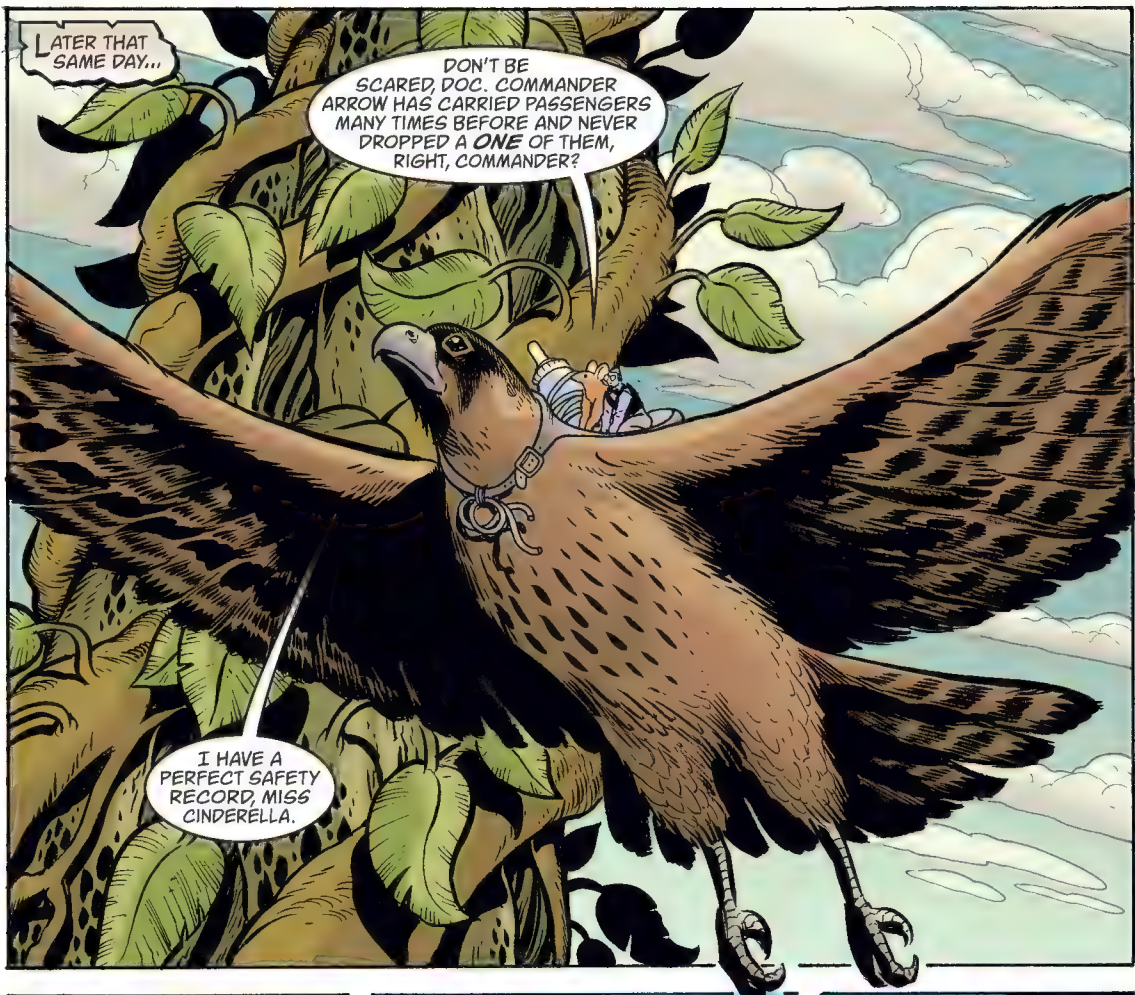


THERE YOU ARE! I WAS GETTING WORRIED.

I IMAGINE YOU'VE ALREADY MET ROSE RED, DOCTOR.



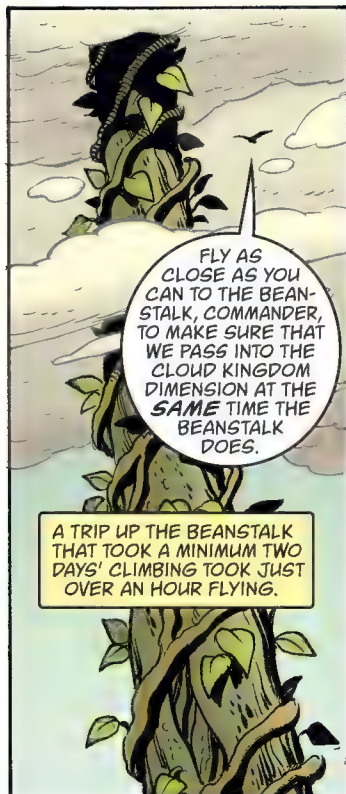
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND **FLYING**, DOC. WE'RE TOO SMALL AND DON'T HAVE TIME FOR A LONG CLIMB.



LATER THAT SAME DAY...

DON'T BE SCARED, DOC. COMMANDER ARROW HAS CARRIED PASSENGERS MANY TIMES BEFORE AND NEVER DROPPED A **ONE** OF THEM, RIGHT, COMMANDER?

I HAVE A PERFECT SAFETY RECORD, MISS CINDERELLA.



FLY AS CLOSE AS YOU CAN TO THE BEANSTALK, COMMANDER, TO MAKE SURE THAT WE PASS INTO THE CLOUD KINGDOM DIMENSION AT THE **SAME** TIME THE BEANSTALK DOES.

A TRIP UP THE BEANSTALK THAT TOOK A MINIMUM TWO DAYS' CLIMBING TOOK JUST OVER AN HOUR FLYING.



THIS IS HOW WE NEED TO DO IT FROM NOW ON.

YOU CAN OPEN YOUR EYES NOW, DOC. WE'RE **HERE**.

YOWP!



THERE! FLY DIRECTLY INTO KING RUMBOLD'S WINDOW, COMMANDER.

IF WE'RE IN LUCK, HE'LL BE ALONE AND ASLEEP AND WE CAN AVOID **LENGTHY** EXPLANATIONS--ESPECIALLY TO THEIR **QUACK** WITCHDOCTOR.



AND ALONE HE WAS. DOCTOR JOLIMUMP WAS OFF DOING HIS PRAYERS OR HEALING DANCES, OR WHATEVER OTHER USELESS MUMBO-JUMBO HE PASSED OFF AS MEDICINE.

FIRST WE'LL GO IN AND APPLY THE EARDROPS.

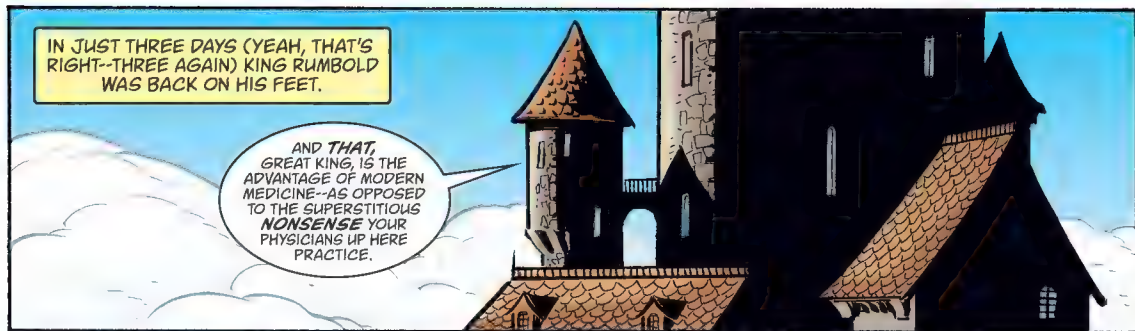


WE DID THE WHOLE THING WITHOUT WAKING THE PATIENT.

THEN WE'LL COME BACK AND FIX UP THE DRAINING TUBE.

THIS IS AMAZING! I'D NEVER IMAGINED MYSELF ON SUCH A GRAND ADVENTURE!

I FEEL LIKE JOHNNY BARLEYCORN OR ONE OF THE OTHER LILLIPUTIAN HEROES OF OLD!



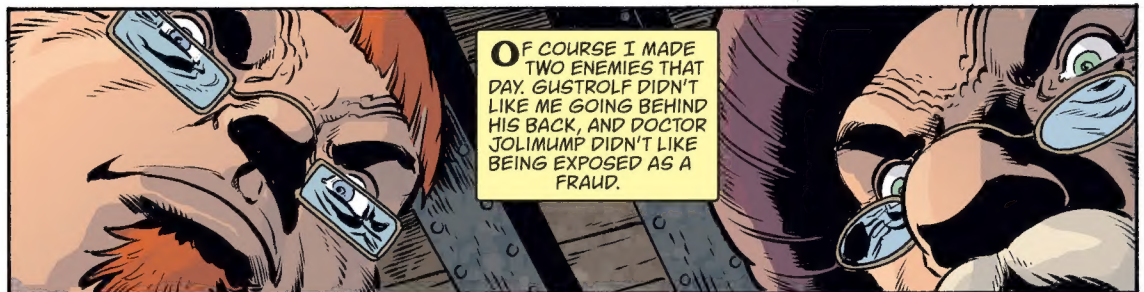
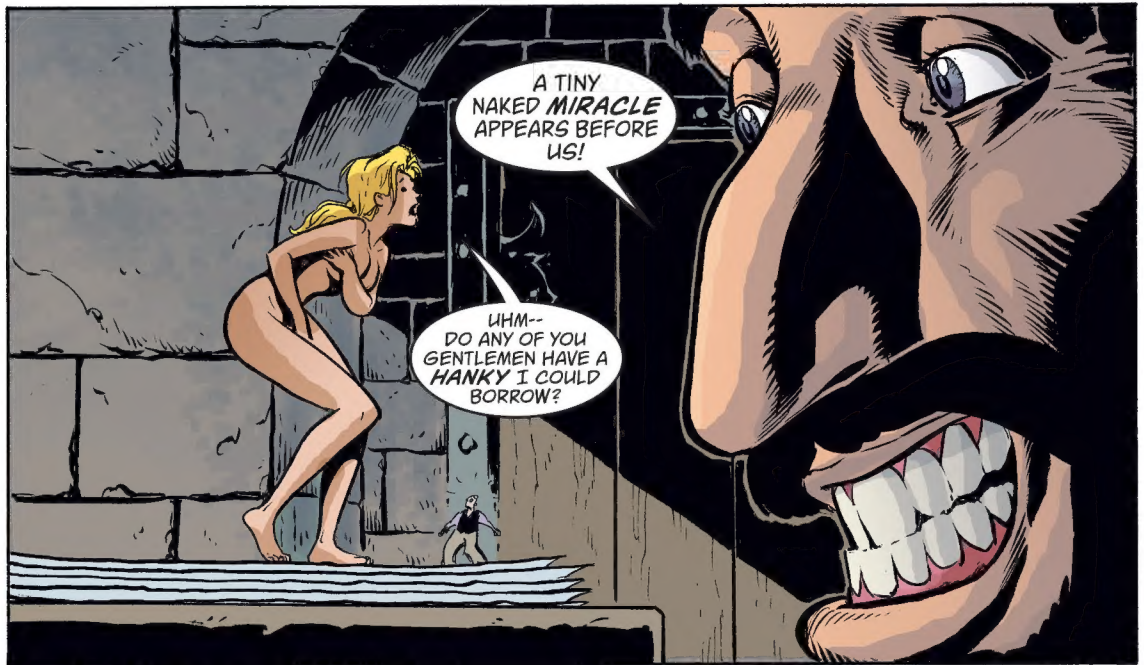
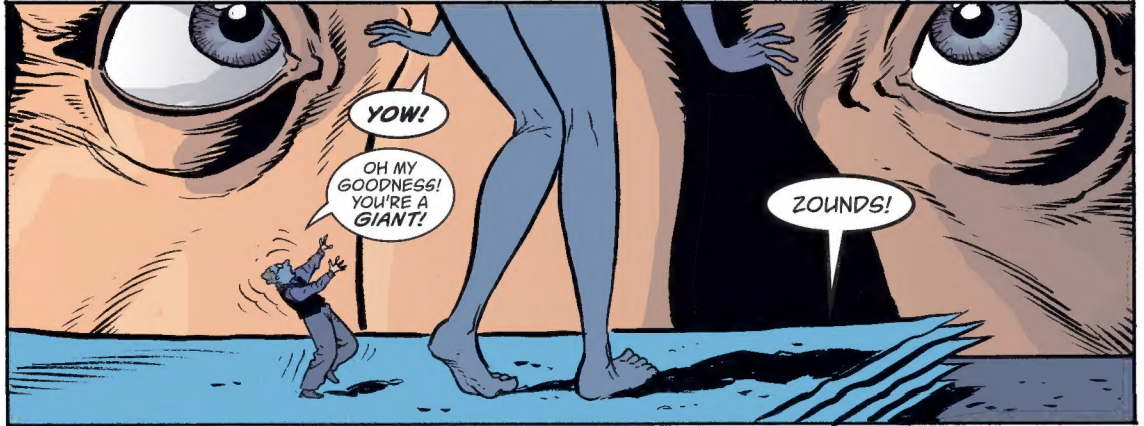
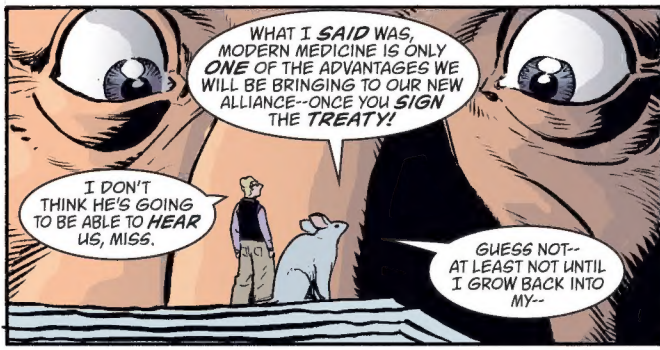
IN JUST THREE DAYS (YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT-THREE AGAIN) KING RUMBOLD WAS BACK ON HIS FEET.

AND THAT, GREAT KING, IS THE ADVANTAGE OF MODERN MEDICINE--AS OPPOSED TO THE SUPERSTITIOUS NONSENSE YOUR PHYSICIANS UP HERE PRACTICE.



WHAT DID YOU SAY? I CAN BARELY HEAR YOU!

WHATEVER YOU'RE SAYING, I CAN HEAR YOU!

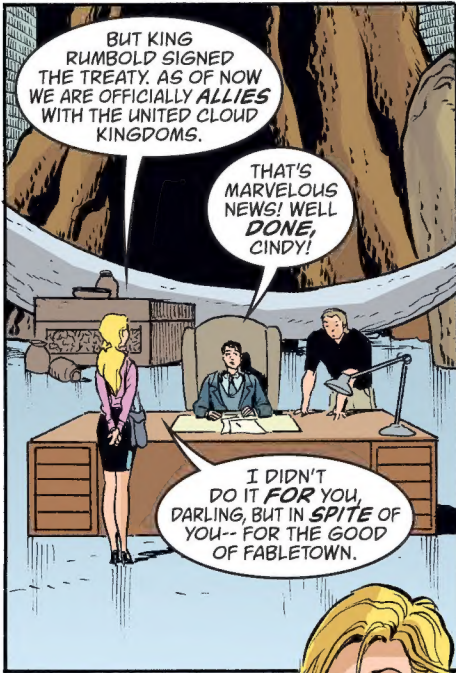




WE NEED TO KEEP AN EYE ON THEM IN THE FUTURE.



YOU CAN **BET** THEY'LL TRY TO CAUSE US GRIEF SOONER OR LATER.



BUT KING RUMBOLD SIGNED THE TREATY. AS OF NOW WE ARE OFFICIALLY **ALLIES** WITH THE UNITED CLOUD KINGDOMS.

THAT'S MARVELOUS NEWS! WELL **DONE**, CINDY!

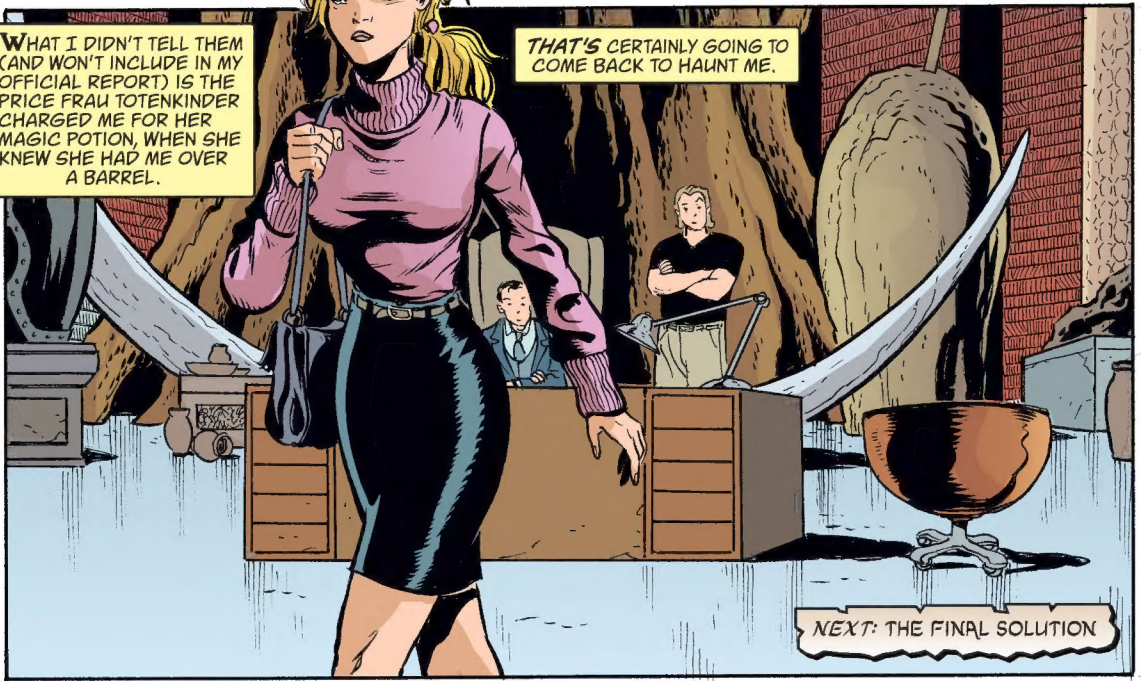
I DIDN'T DO IT **FOR** YOU, DARLING, BUT IN **SPITE** OF YOU-- FOR THE GOOD OF FABLETOWN.

WHAT I DIDN'T TELL THEM (AND WON'T INCLUDE IN MY OFFICIAL REPORT) IS THE PRICE FRAU TOTENKINDER CHARGED ME FOR HER MAGIC POTION, WHEN SHE KNEW SHE HAD ME OVER A BARREL.



ALL THE SAME, WE'RE INDEBTED TO YOU, CINDERELLA.

THEN KINDLY REWARD ME, SHERIFF, BY **NEVER** GIVING ME ANOTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSION.



THAT'S CERTAINLY GOING TO COME BACK TO HAUNT ME.

NEXT: THE FINAL SOLUTION

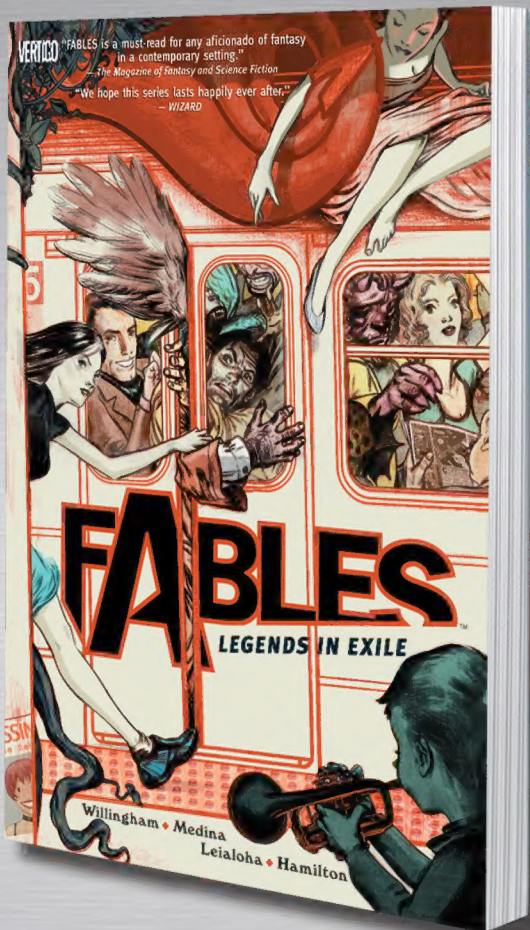
"FABLES is an excellent series in the tradition of SANDMAN, one that rewards careful attention and loyalty." – ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

BILL WILLINGHAM

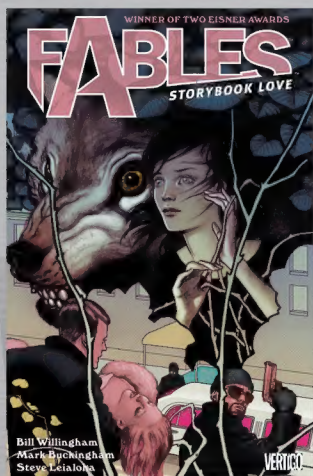
"[A] wonderfully twisted concept... features fairy tale characters banished to the noirish world of present-day New York."
– THE WASHINGTON POST



- VOL. 1: LEGENDS IN EXILE
- VOL. 2: ANIMAL FARM
- VOL. 3: STORYBOOK LOVE
- VOL. 4: MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS
- VOL. 5: THE MEAN SEASONS
- VOL. 6: HOMELANDS
- VOL. 7: ARABIAN NIGHTS (AND DAYS)
- VOL. 8: WOLVES
- VOL. 9: SONS OF EMPIRE
- VOL. 10: THE GOOD PRINCE
- VOL. 11: WAR AND PIECES
- VOL. 12: THE DARK AGES
- VOL. 13: THE GREAT FABLES CROSSOVER
- 1001 NIGHTS OF SNOWFALL



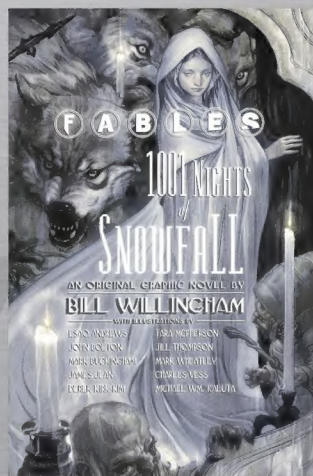
FABLES VOL. 3:
STORYBOOK LOVE



FABLES VOL. 6:
HOMELANDS

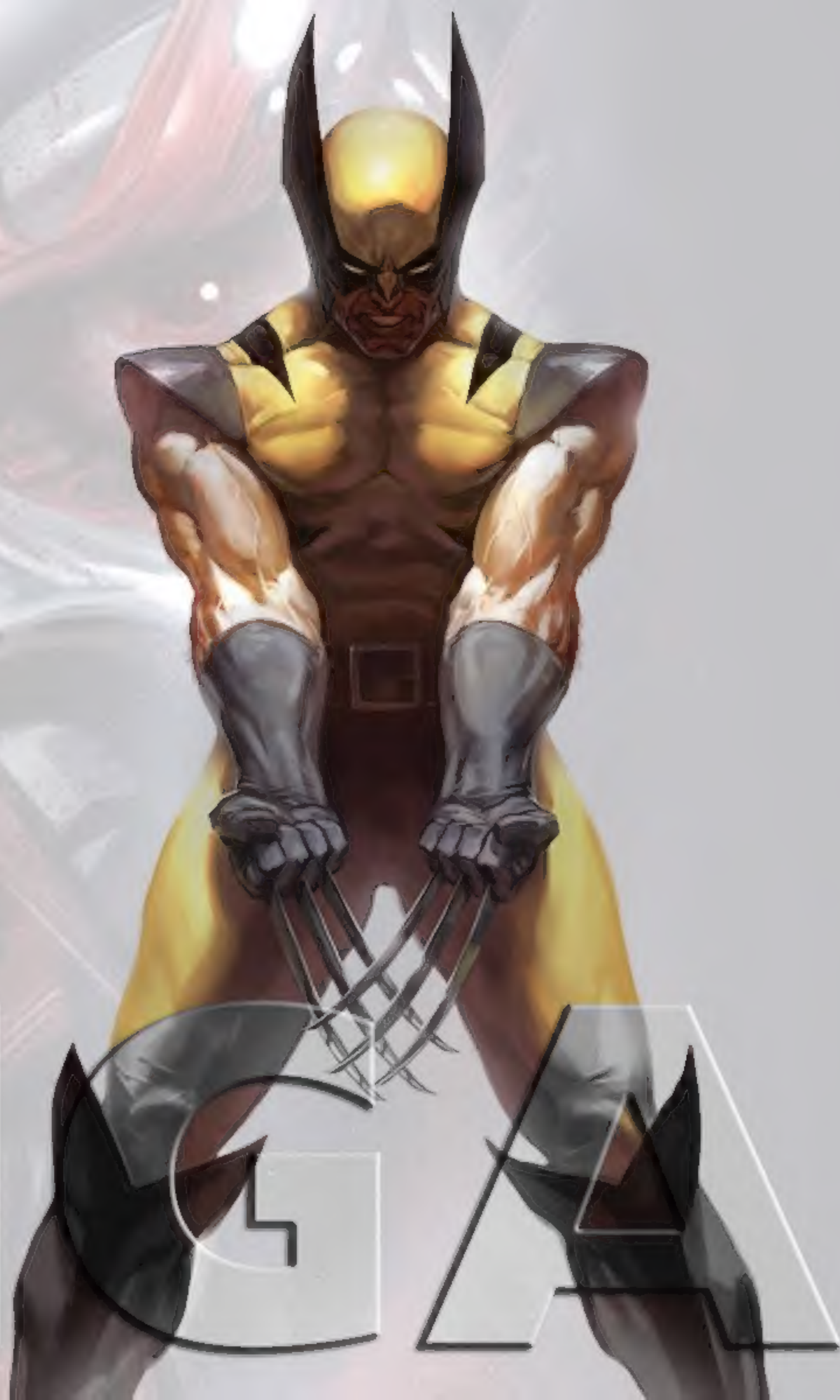


FABLES:
1001 NIGHTS OF SNOWFALL



Use the **BUY IN PRINT** feature to find a comics shop near you.
Check back here every week for **NEW DIGITAL RELEASES!**

Suggested for Mature Readers



NATHAN